

PEACE NEWS

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A New "Grapes of Wrath"

POMERANIAN "DESERT" THAT WAS ONCE A GRANARY

TO add to the plight of Europe's starving populations comes the news that vast tracts of land in the Eastern Provinces of Germany now under Polish administration have been abandoned and huge crops of wheat and potatoes left to rot. It is as if the story of the "Grapes of Wrath" is being retold, with the scene shifted to Southern Pomerania.

THIS human catastrophe is described by Denis Martin, in a dispatch from Berlin to the Daily Herald last week.

Returning prisoners of war and other observers report that huge deserts are developing in the former "granary" country east of the Oder-Neisse frontier, while six out of every ten Germans who once populated this region have either fled or been expelled in conditions of extreme misery.

This countryside with its deserted farmsteads and stretches of wasting crops has become a hunting ground for bands of outlaws. The situation is worst in the regions of Branden-

burg and Stettin, whose fertile land once provided vast supplies. P.O.W.'s told Denis Martin that there was no sign of life for mile after mile as they tramped home from a point north of the Masurian Lakes in East Prussia. Not until they reached the fenland approaches to Danzig were they greeted by a few chickens and some wild horses.

It is estimated, even on the most optimistic basis, that even if a return to stable conditions could be achieved it will be ten or twelve years before the numbers of cattle, horses and pigs can be brought back to normal.

Poles and Germans alike in these areas face starvation not only because of the present shortages but because all sowing has ceased. Disease has made great inroads into the health of the people in the depleted townships, and threatens to spread west with the refugees. Food production in these provinces is down to 11 per cent. of 1938.

An official statement charges the Poles with failure to observe the conditions agreed at Potsdam concerning the expulsions. The British Control Commission alleges that the Polish authorities are transferring an unduly high proportion of the very old, sick and weak persons. The conditions of movement are far from satisfactory. So far the British authorities have received about 300,000 Germans from the east.

"Cut violence where consent ceases!"

THE traditional assurances on which men relied unthinkingly are gone; we do not know where to turn for counsel. The old shibboleths are subdued; those, for instance, who urge that a strongly armed Britain is the surest guarantee of peace and who repeat the tag designed for imperial Rome no longer find their applause. Their words are received in embarrassed silence.

That we must have world government or perish is a commonplace; but from the peoples, exhausted by war and divided by ideologies, there is little emotional response. As it has no relationship to the life of the ordinary man, it is like longing for the moon.

Few of us who are outside of government and business have the opportunity to make cosmopolitanism a living experience. The people have enough to do, living with their neighbours and finding a place in their circumscribed communities; they cannot become imaginatively cosmopolitan. Government and business are intent upon prestige and self-interest, upon power and money; they are equipped neither intellectually nor emotionally for the challenge of federation. In our situation it will be easy for perilous attitudes to develop at both levels of statesman and citizen.

THE statesman may trust that fear will restrain atomic warfare, and that fear itself will abolish major war without any sacrifice of existing advantages and modes of thinking. This appears to be Churchill's attitude. Truman's phrase that "we are either headed for complete destruction or facing the greatest age in history," is surely intended to intimidate foreign listeners more than encourage thinking at home.

On the other hand, our generals seem to have recovered from their initial panic about how armies were to be disposed against atomic bombs. Already they pooh-pooh the bomb, "nothing has changed; our profession is not in jeopardy. This is the usual historical sequence in warfare and in the normal run of things an antidote to the bomb will be found." They will gain scant comfort from the scientists who see this thesis as pathetic delusion.

On the other level, the citizen succumbing from a sense of impotence to the death-wish in our make-up may

become unpolitical and resigned to his fate. Living in the modern world is seldom meaningful and satisfying. It may be that we who have found living too much for us will have come to fear living more than dying. Death to an unchristian world has no memories and no judgment. For several years sudden death has been a feature of our climate, and since we British are ashamed of ideas that conflict with

This article was written by JOHN HAMBLING while a captain in the RAMC awaiting Court Martial. As reported in Peace News, April 5, he declined further Army duties after the use of the atom bomb. He has now been dismissed from the service, but no other penalty has been imposed. At the Court Martial a senior officer described him as an extraordinarily efficient MO.

our sense of social duty, we are likely to think we can take the new bomb as we took the old, simply because we feel we ought. After all, atomic death may have advantages over natural death, being unheralded and certain. Is it to be welcomed as the least painful way of dying? To all of us comes death; can it matter that it comes sooner rather than later? You cannot fool the man in the street. Only the professional soldier, secure in a new sense of indispensability and power in the military states emerging from the war, continue to spout the same old nonsense, making demands in men and equipment that will make disaster the more complete, whilst denying us an escape into any temporary haven of leisure.

Statesmen are still in bondage to power politics; the peace-loving citizen feels important; the soldier grows fat upon our insecurity.

WORLD government is a solution to our predicament and the idea will hold many would-be pacifists outside our organization. It must be supported as a practicable solution only as federation by consent—now. Unification by conquest is not a practicable alternative, because although we might expect the

THE Western world—the liberal-democratic world—is in a crisis of stagnation. The need of a forward-looking initiative is desperately urgent. Before it can be taken, the more paralyzing illusions must be cleared away.

The chief of these is that it is possible, at the present time, for Russia and the West to agree upon a constructive policy for Europe and the world. Much has already been lost by waiting for such an agreement, and by hoping, against hope and the plain evidence, that it was attainable.

It is not attainable. The sooner we concentrate on what can be done instead of dreaming about what might have been, the better for us all. In this spirit we unreservedly welcome the New Statesman's (Ap. 13) belated but forthright acknowledgement of the real position.

"It is clear that the Russians do not wish for co-operation and friendly relations between the three Allied Powers. It is essential now to state and face this fact frankly."

From this acknowledgement the New Statesman passes indeed to a more doubtful contention.

"It is doubtful whether, so far as Britain is concerned, the continuance of UNO is desirable. Its transformation into a bloc to which the USSR is hostile and which is hostile to the USSR would be inevitable. In the atomic age, this country cannot afford to take part in another war."

Reversion to anarchy

THAT sounds plausible. But the disbandment of UNO would not alter the real situation. It would be

Len Stagnation of the Western World INITIATIVE DESPERATELY NEEDED

I WAS not altogether surprised to learn of the amount of money we are still having to pay for the rehabilitation of Germany. I think the Government, in the next few months, will have to consider very carefully the issue which has been presented so well in this week's "Economist."

There, it says that the policy we are pursuing in Germany is one of great difficulty, and is leading to so many setbacks in the Germans' efforts to build themselves up again that it is almost inevitable that we shall have to continue to pay out, for Germany, money which we badly need for ourselves.

I do not feel that the Government really need urging in this direction, but I hope back benchers will give them every possible encouragement in embarking on a saner and more reconciling policy towards the German people in order that we may be relieved of this enormous burden of expenditure for the rehabilitation and policing of Germany.

—James Hudson, M.P., in the Commons, Ap. 9.

only an explicit reversion to international anarchy. If UNO were formally abolished, Britain would still be under the necessity of trying to build up a new system of relations between the nation-states. That could be only the tentative beginnings of a voluntary federation.

Now, whether this incipient federation be conceived as one of social-democracies, or democracies, or—probably best—of states with a constitutional government, it will be represented by Russia as a hostile bloc. For the root of the grave disease of civilization today is that Russia regards as a menace the very conception of a supernational law. Any association of nation-states which is based on the recognition of such a law, and aims at defining and formulating it, automatically incurs the suspicion and hostility of Russia.

Only a fundamental change in Russia can alter that fact. No superficial alteration of Russian policy would now carry the least conviction. Nothing short of a spiritual revolution in Russia will weaken its implacable opposition to every attempt to establish the reign of Law between the nations.

War into Law

THE life—the peculiar and individual life of this country—depends upon extending the reign of Law between the nations. Those who see plainly that to be involved in another war would be sheer suicide for Britain should see, with equal clarity, that the only substitute for War is Law. To dream of excluding War, yet to ignore the necessity of Law, is to cease to think coherently. It is the mere negation of thought.

There is a good reason to be urged (CONTINUED ON BACK PAGE)

ERRATIC LINES

ON the wall of the Accounts Dept. here at Dick Sheppard House, Trebor Davies, the PPU Accountant, has fashioned a graph showing our income during the year. He has drawn three lines which indicate the amounts which according to the budget should come in from our three main sources of income—area contributions (Nottingham scheme), members' subscriptions sent direct to this office, and donations sent in response to this fortnightly headquarters appeal.

He has also drawn three lines, more erratic ones, to indicate the amounts so far received. The Nottingham scheme "actual" line is a very disappointing one—we hope this will be corrected later in the year. The subscriptions line is encouraging—more than the amount for which we had budgeted. So also (to my surprise I must admit!) is the line for amounts received in response to this appeal—fine tribute personally to Maud Rountree and Corder Catchpool, as well as to our friends' generosity.

Corder Catchpool is at present in Germany. He returns after Easter. Our need of funds is still pressing. My hope is that this fortnight there may be an even finer response than usual to this appeal, so that we have encouraging news with which to greet him when he returns to take up his PPU duties.

PATRICK FIGGIS.

Contributions to Headquarters Fund since April 5: £36 12s. 0d. Year's total to date: £195 2s. 11d.

Donations to the fund should be sent, marked "Headquarters Fund," to the Treasurers at Dick Sheppard House, Endsleigh St., W.C.I.

PEACE NEWS

3, Blackstock Road, London, N.4.
Stamford Hill 2262

All correspondence on other than editorial matters
should be addressed to the Manager

Ration bread now!

AN American correspondent writes to us: "We are guilty, I believe, of the grossest greed in history." It is not for us to endorse or qualify that verdict, but merely to record it. But it is true that USA is now failing the world badly. The real causes of the failure have been two: the lack of firm, clear and persuasive leadership since Roosevelt's untimely death, and the lack of imagination in the ordinary folk. In this latter respect the ordinary folk of USA are no better and no worse than the citizens of democracy everywhere. It is as difficult for them to take the plight of Europe seriously, three thousand miles away, as it is difficult for the average Englishman to take seriously the plight of India or China.

That is why the moral and intellectual quality of democratic leadership matters so enormously: and the drop from a Roosevelt to a Truman has been so disastrous. It would have required all Roosevelt's moral authority to maintain the price-structure in USA after the conclusion of hostilities, against the pressure of private interests.



The campaign for "the removal of controls" in this country failed completely at the time of the election because everyone had been indoctrinated with the necessity of control. Moreover, the need was obvious. There was shortage of everything. But in USA the need was not obvious. There was, and is, plenty of everything. Add to that the individualism of the most individualistic country in the world: and it becomes obvious that it would have required a very great leader indeed to hold the line of price controls.

As it was, Congress, under the influence of pressure groups and without a strong lead from the President, refused to vote definitely for the renewal of the Office of Price Administration (OPA) beyond June 1. In consequence the farmers have not been slaughtering their pigs, but feeding them with the grain which the USA Government had undertaken to send to Europe. They calculated that, with OPA safely abolished, they would get a much better price for their pigs, and their grain in the shape of pig-meat, after June 1 than before. So that the grain which should now have been feeding starving Europe, has been fed to the pigs.

It is a sordid story—but it must be borne in mind by those who may be indignant if the British Government is reluctant to respond to Mr. La

Guardia's call that it should make its stocks immediately available for Europe. USA has fallen down on its commitments to UNRRA. If Britain uses her stocks to make up some of the USA deficit to UNRRA, how can the Government be sure the stocks will be replaced? Moreover, if as seems probable, the USA fails to send the amount she has agreed to supply to India; and if, as the British government fears, proposals are also made to divert Canadian wheat supplies from this country, our position and our responsibilities will be truly desperate.

It is quite beyond Britain's power to save the situation. Only USA can do that. Britain can, by taking a serious risk, stave off the worst, but only if USA comes to the rescue immediately after. And the risk has become steadily more serious as the continued failure of USA to fulfil commitments has become more evident. No fair-minded man will blame the British government if it refuses to take the risk of denuding its stocks. But we have every right to condemn the Government if it shrinks from rationing bread immediately. That is a gesture which we owe to suffering Europe, and a sacrifice we ought to impose upon ourselves.

LETTERS

The Nation-State

I should like to add another comment to the one you have published already about Mr. Murry's broadcast. In his last talk he judiciously modified his statement that man today is the nation-state. As applied to Britain, the statement requires still further modification. It is high time that all Englishmen realized that Britain at any rate is not a nation-state. The Government contains representatives of four nations. While it is unfortunately true that that Government is becoming increasingly centralized, a high percentage of Welsh, Scots and Northern Irish would indignantly reject any suggestion of identification with the Anglo-dominated bureaucracy in Whitehall.

In the light of national principles (not to speak of pacifism) Observer's sit-on-the-fence in face of peace-time conscription is alarmingly immoral. Churchill himself did not dare to conscript the Northern Irish even in war-time. It is to be hoped that the Welsh and the Scots will stand up to the Labour betrayal.

J. Gwynn GRIFFITHS.
Bala, Wales.

Contracting-in

Although I welcome the measure introduced by the present Government to repeal the Trades Disputes Act of 1926, those of us who want an enlightened democratic-socialist world will not welcome the "contract out" position being re-established.

I want people to be supporters of the socialist movement, but as conscious, active individuals, and not be merely nominal supporters. It is precisely because of this event that I believe if a Trades Unionist wishes to give financial support to the Labour party, he should do so by contracting-in as an overt and voluntary act.

The fact that the amount realized by the political levy has been less since 1926, reveals that the Labour party funds were supplemented more by "defaulters" having regards to the apathy of the average individual.

A new note in politics would be struck, if the Government decided to leave the political levy as it is. Even if the party funds were limited by such an act. They would have the satisfaction that their subscribers were willing and positive in their support. The Government's moral reputation would be enhanced.

FRANK MAITLAND.

North Collingham,
Notts.

Is it "Communism"?

I am one of those who warmly endorse what you say in your editorial, "An alternative to Communism" (PN, April 5). But for the sake of precision, should there not be inverted commas around "Communism"? The word has been debased by being applied to the State Capitalism of the Soviet Union. It is not what Marx and Lenin visualized; and even if we accept the necessity for so-called "Socialist" transition stage, surely what is going on in Russia now—an investment system, chauvinism, militarism, glorification of national "heroes," dead and living—is not the correct pre-conditioning for advance to the higher political, social and economic level?

We certainly need to save Europe and the world from what Messrs. Stalin and Co. call Communism. It is as bad as Anglo-American capitalist imperialism. But real Communism—via Democratic-Socialism—is surely what all progressives should be aiming at.

JOHN JENNINGS.

28 Brunswick Street,
Swansea.

Social conscience

If Dion Byngham is referring to the Nuremberg trials as "cant, humbug and hypocrisy," he is probably right, but the fact that they

ESME WYNNE-TYSON writes of the

Sermon on the Mount - VINDICATED

TWO thousand years ago, a great Teacher reminded the world of the fundamental spiritual truth that evil can only be overcome by good. This was the basic principle of his life, and he not only preached but practised it from the beginning to the end of his short but remarkable ministry.

The four gospels consist of a series of teachings and works all exemplifying this one point: that whatever appears as evil must be replaced by that which is good, whether the evil is physical, mental, moral, social or economic; sickness must be replaced by health, lack by supply, impurity by purity, slavery by freedom and, finally, with a supreme effort, death by Life eternal.

No other means

The reason for his insistence on this method of overcoming evil with good is, simply, that by no other means can it ever be overcome. The world's method of meeting force with force, evil with evil, merely establishes greater evil where a lesser has been, a fact so obvious to students of history, sociology and psychology that it is a marvel that governments and people have not faced it and acted upon it before now. But they have not. When it comes to practical policy, this simple truth which may be said to be the central core of the Christian Way, has been overlooked or rejected even by those who claim to be Christians.

THE chief blame for this, perhaps, can be laid at the door of the theologians, for they have led their followers astray. At the time of the acceptance of Christianity by the larger world, civilization was in need of a new religion; the old altars were deserted and the peoples getting out of control. Mithraism and Christianity were both in the running as choices for a new world-religion, and the teachings of Jesus of Nazareth, appealing to the heart of the common man and impressing by their "works" or "marvels," eventually, but by quite a narrow margin, won.

But they won chiefly in the person of Jesus Christ. The man rather than his Way was the chief point of focus, which suited the book of the theologians. Personalities are convenient pegs on which to hang whatever happens to be the popular or expedient theory, whether that person really preached them or not; old fables and occult mysteries can be revived and worked up about them which will conveniently distract attention from the essential, but often embarrassing, doctrines of the new Teacher.

And it is true that, in this, the priests of no matter what faith

have been called marks, surely, a progress in "Social Conscience." If they prepare the way for the beginnings of international law, public morality is served. That it is so served by the nature of politics. Mr. Byngham could hardly expect the victors to provide the necessary sacrifice.

FREDRICK LOHR.

170 Westbourne Terrace, W.2.

Roll of Honour

Your columns have, from time to time, contained references to the formation of a Pacifist Church, but this may take time. Meanwhile, religious pacifists may (a) attend a service conducted by a known pacifist; (b) attend the Society of Friends; (c) swallow their scruples, and listen to the Gospel of love from one, who thinks it embraces the slaughter of enemies; (d) discontinue public worship. For those who prefer (a), would it be possible for you to print a list of those honourable men, those clergy and ministers who adhered to and preached a really Christian Gospel, during the war years?

TOM SULLIVAN.

1 Knockhreda Park,

Belfast.

(It would be impracticable.—Ed., PN.)

Information please!

As a regular reader of Peace News, may I suggest that you more often include the address of COBSRA, or "Save Europe Now," to which donations may be sent? I had to wait several weeks before I could find their address. Others like me may wish to help, but be prevented by lack of information.

I. DENBY.

The Haven, Bullockstone Road,

Horne Bay, Kent.

(COBSRA, 75 Victoria St., W.C.1. "Save Europe Now," 14 Henrietta St., W.C.2.—Ed., PN.)

usually gain the support and co-operation of the majority of the people. The teachings of the Enlightened are, on the whole, considered too difficult and exacting for acceptance by the common man. It is far easier and more comfortable to imagine that one can be saved merely by believing in the miraculous origin of a person and in his vicarious atonement for one's sins than to forsake those sins, accept that person's Way of life, and endeavour at all times to overcome evil with good. And, on the other hand, a priesthood which, by the authority of that "person" has power to forgive sins and is generally credited with a greater wisdom and understanding of the intricate dogmas—which the theologians have themselves evolved—than the common people, has obviously much more authority, standing and power than a priesthood which can only say: "Obey the teachings and do the works of the man, Jesus Christ, and you will realize your sonship with God." That is putting the onus on the individual, and neither the Church nor the individual really desires that.

INEVITABLY, therefore, attention must be turned from Principle to person. In order to ensure an ethical background which will keep the masses quiet and reasonably well-behaved, a certain amount of good instruction from the teachings of the Founder of the faith must, of course, be disseminated, but always with the firm reservation that no ethic should be insisted upon which might conflict with the interests of the Church and State—if the State is strong enough to repress the activities of the Church.

Christianity, therefore, instead of being the dynamic Way of life led by Jesus of Nazareth became the personality-worship of a Church-moulded Master, who, to the unbiased, bears little relation to the central figure of the gospels, and, in some cases, of his mother, whose brief appearances in the gospels, after the first conflicting statements about the Nativity, are, on the whole, rather ignominious.

By theological ingenuity the Sermon on the Mount and other advanced teachings are twisted on occasions to mean precisely what their author did not mean, as, for instance, when faced with enemy aggression; for then the historic Jesus is pictured as an Archetype Combatant, a pattern for all right-minded patriots to follow; his words: "Greater love hath no man than this, that he lay down his life for his friends," is interpreted as a rallying call to arms and atom-bombs; in fact, a recruiting speech. The shameful phrase, actually a correlative of the above: "Resist not evil, but overcome evil with good" is kept in the background—advice only fit for cravens, or such "cranks" as Mr. Gandhi. With the result that "Christian soldiers" have, since the crusades, been as active as any follower of Mohammed in "marching on to war" and opposing the evil of physical force with still stronger physical force, until finally the evil of Nazi-totalitarianism was combated with the (numerically) still greater evil of Russian totalitarianism, and the non-totalitarian world is now at once aghast, aggrieved and dismayed to find this greater expression of totalitarianism triumphantly besetting the earth, and the logical culmination of the policy of opposing force by force symbolized in the atom bomb, which menaces the very existence of humanity.

IS it not time that we truly cried: "Peccavi"? Is it not time that we really "bent the knee" to the author of the Sermon on the Mount, and admitted that he was right and we most grievously wrong? Until we all come to that necessary repentance, there will be no peace nor security in the world, however well governments regiment their people, however dexterously or wisely the "economic system" is adjusted.

* * *

Jesus said that mankind could be saved by keeping his commandments. After two thousand years it is made terribly obvious to all those with eyes to see that it can be saved in no other way.

What? 'No Servile State'?

To the Editor

ARE not Mr. Wilfred Wellock and his supporters a little too pessimistic about the horrors of life in the "servile state" which they seem to believe that the present Government with its plans for socialization is going to create?

Personally, I am whole-heartedly in favour of a return to the land, the renaissance of village society and so on. Over twenty years ago, I began to try to put some of these theories into practice by leaving the Government Service and taking up agriculture. Not only have I ruined myself in the process but I found only a very small minority of idealistic fellow fools who have tried to do more than talk about their love of the land and the rural life. And every one of these ex-middle-class back-to-the-landers is in the same boat as myself, either *spurlos versenkt* or barely showing above the water. In spite of which I still stubbornly believe in the land as the source of a great deal of the joy of life and the village as an essential cornerstone of a sane social organization.

Idealism and fact

It is useless, however, for idealism to butt its head against a brick wall of fact—the fact that the vast majority of English-speaking people favour industrialization, city life and security. Perhaps they do not understand the price they will have to pay for these privileges. Or perhaps they are willing to pay the price in order to exchange their right to starve at liberty or work as the economic serfs of an individual capitalistic employer for the less horrible serfdom of working for the State.

It is really rather comic the way members of the middle-classes condemn the "servile state" when so many are themselves State Servants of one kind or another. Do those of the middle-classes who have retained their freedom to exploit their fellow

Prelude to Indian freedom

ABAD example by British political censorship comes to light in a communication from the Federation of Indian Associations in Great Britain.

In April 1945 this federation sent out to 49 national delegations attending the first conference of UNO in San Francisco a Memorandum protesting against British nominees "representing" India. It demanded—in almost conventional terms—the freedom of India, as liberals, congressmen, socialists, industrialists, peasants and workers alike, whatever their domestic differences, were unanimously agreed that British rule should end. Embassies and Legations in London were similarly circumscribed.

After more than nine months the letter addressed to the USA, were returned to London in batches marked "Held by British censor—released January, 1946."

men as best they can look with pity or contempt on those of their number who serve in the Armed Forces or Civil Services? This does not seem to be the case. Nor is it true that middle-class State Servants lose their individuality as a result of serving the state. Vide the number of books and pictures written or painted by them. These works are not those of genius. But they show that the creative urge is not necessarily killed by State Service.

IF middle-class State Servants manage to retain their individuality and creative abilities, why should working-class State Servants lose theirs if they exchange their present haphazard, insecure existence for one of steady work and wages—the security the middle-class State Servant receives in exchange for the loss of some personal liberty? On the contrary, it appears that, relieved of the ever-present, terrifying fear of insecurity, the minds and spirits of the working class may flower in creative work. Given a decent standard of living, and the certainty of a pension, the working-class may soon be haunting the libraries, art galleries and museums as assiduously as they now haunt the pub and the race-track.

No one who has not personally endured the squalor and frustration of a working man's life, in either the city or the country today, ought to object to his release from his present condition of economic servitude. Only those who have lived and worked among the manual workers on exactly similar terms, financial and domestic, can understand the intolerable handicaps which they endure.

All who genuinely desire a better world ought to support any system of government which will give the masses a reasonable standard of life, leisure in which to develop themselves and security in old age.

Greed over-estimated

Mr. Wellock's friends seem also to over-estimate the greed of the majority of human beings. True enough, there are many members of the middle-classes who have proved themselves insatiably greedy and they are ably supported by former members of the working-class who have risen in the social scale. But the mass of human beings of any class is not so greedy. Until I was over thirty, I lived among the middle classes and never knew any individual who owned a car more luxurious than a Ford. Nor did I find any of these Ford owners weeping their eyes out because they could not afford a Rolls Royce. The manual workers are more eager for a tiny house and garden and security in their old age than they are for even an eighth-hand Morris.

I doubt very much if the world will come to an end or civilization be destroyed if they are given a standard of life closer to that of the present middle or upper-classes. I fear it is the people who have already got far more than is good for them and who ought to know better, who have already done their best to wreck the world and who will complete their destructive work if nothing is done to stop them.

Saturna Island, H. N. LOCH.
British Columbia, Canada.

Transatlantic Round-up

CONSCRIPTION - "A FEUDAL RELIC"

WITH the expiration of Selective Service, the law providing for military conscription in the United States, due on May 15, the protagonists there are already joined in battle.

LATEST to join the ranks of those who reject peacetime conscription is an Army "high-up," Gen. H. C. Holdridge, who was honourably retired in Feb. 1944 for "physical disability incurred in line of duty."

According to Conscription News, Washington, Gen. Holdridge startled the House Military Affairs Committee recently by his condemnation of compulsory military training and fiercely attacked the "fascist nature of the Army itself." American newspapers gave him wide publicity, the Washington Daily News devoting the entire front page to his testimony.

He characterized the insistence on training 18-year-old boys as a carry-over from the feudal era when all that was required of a soldier was the ability to march, to shoot, to ride, or to handle a sabre. This doctrine is even militarily dangerous. An Army was not, and could not be, a benign socially-conscious institution acting as god-father to youth.

Gen. Holdridge, speaking on behalf of the Veterans' League, demanded that the US should initiate action to abolish conscription all over the world. "Believing that another world war will mean the suicide of civilization, we demand that warfare be outlawed hereafter, and not merely the weapons."

"At a time," his statement concludes, "when the United States should assume a moral leadership among the nations of the world, our Army proposes that we serve notice on the world that we intend to arm every male in the country."

Amnesty sought for 6,000

OVER 3,000 COs are still in USA prisons. Many are serving five-year sentences. Recently two college girls, according to the Amnesty Bulletin, published in New York, presented a petition at the White House demanding their release.

The petition, signed by over 150 members of the Swarthmore College, near Philadelphia, called for the immediate granting of a general amnesty. A further 3,000 who were imprisoned earlier are included in the amnesty declaration. Without amnesty, it is claimed, these 6,000 will be prevented from practising law, medicine and the professions and will be branded as "felons" for life.

Amnesty has also been demanded for 41 advocates of Puerto Rican independence, including Rafael Lopez Rosas, now serving his second sentence and who on release faces the prospect of another five years, making ten years in all for the same offence.

Latest news from the Committee for Amnesty states that a mass demonstration is planned for "the last day"—May 15—outside the White House to picket against conscription. Plans are being made to charter buses to transport supporters from New York, Philadelphia and Baltimore.

"A little mercy"

An article in the Washington News by the columnist, Thomas L. Stokes, which called for "a little mercy for those who disagree" has been reprinted by the Committee for Amnesty, New York. Referring to the Christmas picket at the White House, Stokes commented:

"Under the awful shadow of the atomic bomb, it seems that it is going to take some resistance in all of us to the use of war to settle our differences, the courage to cast aside old conceptions of national honour and national pride and the fear of being afraid not to fight."

It is good that Mr. Federn says, "A people who do not waste their money on armaments will be able to pay the just price for food"; but a people who do not allow their substance to be wasted on manipulators' interest, will be able to pay the just price for everything, and banish war. Mr. Federn's work should be studied with respect.

April 19, 1946, PEACE NEWS—3

No Peace for UNO

AMERICAN pacifists picketed a reception given in New York on March 25 by Edward R. Stettinius Jr., to 350 delegates to UNO.

Peacefully parading outside the Hotel Savoy Plaza—a legal right in New York City—the pickets carried signs and leaflets decrying Imperialism and appealing to the peoples of all countries to refuse to bear and make arms. The demonstration was organized by the recently formed Committee for Non-Violent Revolution.

Police prevented the group from walking in front of the hotel. When one picket ran into the hotel he was arrested, and eight others were charged with disorderly conduct. Fines up to 50 dollars were imposed, but the American Civil Liberties Union may support an appeal.

PEACE AND ORDER

Peace, Prosperity, International Order by Robert Federn, Williams and Norgate.

THIS too modestly produced study of the principle of international order, ruthless as the sword of Justice and thus only for the robust in mind and heart, is so packed with the factual and vital, and is so stimulating that it is impossible to discuss it as it deserves during a paper famine.

Mr. Federn has experience, has read widely, and, quoting his authorities, chooses and rejects with decisiveness. Few readers will not be informed by this painstaking work. Mr. Federn, who wrote it in 1944, might conceivably write differently today, when he may behold the embryo of the World Federation for which he pleads, menaced by behaviour which cannot be described more leniently than as immature where the whole world requires the richest maturity of behaviour.

Mr. Federn stoutly asserts that in an International Parliament the number of deputies sent should be related to the size of the population of the sending country, and dismisses as unwarranted, apprehension as to this. "One People will never rule the world," he says. It is an attractive assertion, but support is urgently needed.

It is puzzling that while Mr. Federn sees disarmament a prerequisite of success in World Federation, he has written a quarter of his admirable book before he declares: "The World Federation will only be possible in a disarmed world . . . Disarmament is paramount."

He comments bitterly on the "Tentative Proposals" issued after Dumbarton Oaks. "Poor members of the General Assembly," says Mr. Federn, "will have to rack their brains to find what pertains to peace and what to welfare"; and meanwhile Rome may burn. Clearly, deputies must not sit glowering at each other through fiery eyes and bloated with pride, prestige, and other puerilities, but, purged of these infantile fevers, see their duty as adult persons, and do it. With reliving penetration Mr. Federn declares:

"The PEOPLES have never had the opportunity of deciding on the issue of war and peace, otherwise wars would have been rare. If things continue as they are, the Governments will continue to force the decision upon them . . . Why is there no body (of opinion)?" he asks.

"Because the many national governments hinder their peoples from forming one, though the peoples yearn to do it . . . There is something better than legalistic theory—universal need, craving, and resolution to form such a body."

It is good that Mr. Federn says, "A people who do not waste their money on armaments will be able to pay the just price for food"; but a people who do not allow their substance to be wasted on manipulators' interest, will be able to pay the just price for everything, and banish war. Mr. Federn's work should be studied with respect.

J. W. RATTRAY.

PERSONAL

VOLUNTEER WANTED for Spring-cleaning at Dick Sheppard House. Write: P.P.U. Gen. Sec., 6 Endsleigh St., W.C.1.

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LITERATURE. &c.

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UNITARIAN PUBLICATIONS. "Unitarian Ideals and Realities," W. Lawrence Schroeder, M.A. This and other publications sent on receipt of postage. Apply by letter to Rev. Helen L. Phillips, 14 Gordon Square, London, W.C.1.

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UNO OBSTRUCTS ESTABLISHMENT OF WORLD LAW

'OBSERVER' CONTINUED

why Britain should withdraw from UNO. That UNO will become a bloc hostile to Russia is a thoroughly bad one. The good one is that the structure of UNO itself—largely because its final form was dictated by Russia—excludes the conception of Law. The one and only reason for accepting UNO was the slender, but not to be despised, chance of establishing by experiment that genuine co-operation between Russia and the West was possible. If this had been possible, a nucleus of law would have been created.

But the retention of the mere machinery of UNO when Russia refuses to make any effort for such co-operation, is nonsensical. Unless Russia deliberately withdraws—and why on earth should she?—UNO becomes a convenient machine by which Russia can prevent the establishment of Law.

A new start

THIS is the reason why Britain should withdraw from UNO. So long as UNO preserves its existing constitution—and Russia can prevent it from being changed—and so long as Russia maintains her present attitude, UNO becomes a device for preventing the world from emerging from anarchy. The only thing to do at this level is to form an entirely new association of nations: democratic and constitutional in principle. But that will take a long time. The USA would have to be the prime mover in such an effort. It is plain that USA is not ready for the role.

What then remains? That Britain

should take a more local and restricted initiative. Here, also, the practical difficulties are very great, at any rate for the moment. The immediate obstacle is the attitude of France, which apparently insists on the political separation of the Ruhr and the Rhineland from Germany.

Dilemma for France

THERE are several things to be said about this. The most important is that it would be fatal to the peace of Europe. If the French were to succeed in detaching the Ruhr and the Rhineland from Germany, they could hold it only by the power of the Red Army.

Moreover the effort to hold it would tear contemporary France into pieces. Gone for ever are the days when France could look to Soviet Russia for a purely military alliance to hold Germany in check. Now a stern price has to be paid for strictly temporary accommodation. France can have the Ruhr and the Rhineland by turning Communist; and having turned Communist, it will lose the Ruhr and the Rhineland. A Communist Germany is from the Russian point of view more precious and more dependable than a Communist France will ever be. France, by demanding the Rhineland and the Ruhr, is putting its neck into a noose that will be quickly tightened.

The French, in spite of their ancestral and obsolete fears, will realize that they are making for the abyss. The alliance between the Catholic MRP and the Communists on this point is a monstrosity. Very soon after the coming elections it will die—of inherent non-entity.

British counsel

THERE is nothing for Britain to do but to wait till France comes to her senses, and realizes the moral imbecility of her policy. But to be able to do nothing does not mean that Britain should say nothing. This is the age of propaganda; and Britain should be instructing the world of her own conception of a just international society, and as a derivative of this, of her conception of Germany's place within it. Above all, she should be instructing France. For France is sick in soul, incapable without help of escaping from the neurotic condition of self-contradiction in which she is imprisoned.

To make concessions to the French neurosis is fatal. Britain does not need an alliance with France. But a liberal France cannot live without a close association with Britain. If France is to become liberal again, then it is worth making any sacrifice to strengthen her. France cannot seize the Ruhr and the Rhineland—or even the Saar—and be liberal. On this matter Britain dare not compromise. If she does, France and Europe and ultimately Britain herself will succumb to darkness.

Communist contradictions

IT will not be very long before the tortuous contradictions of Russian policy reveal themselves to the French people. Communists in France demanding the Ruhr and the Rhineland—Communists in Germany claiming to stand for the unity of the Reich! That humbug cannot last much longer. But by the time it is swept away France may be more desperately sick than ever. The temporary reversion to de Gaulleism will have served as a cover to further political disintegration: from which

STATEMENTS FOR A.G.M. DISCUSSION

In order to make plain that they are in no sense agreed policy statements but merely submitted as likely to provide a basis for discussion from which a more considered statement can be framed, the National Council of the PPU has amended the titles of the two statements concerned to read "Draft Statement."

The Draft Statement submitted by the Immediate Issues Committee has been amended to read:

"In view of the conception of Collective Security embodied in the Charter of the United Nations, this AGM reasserts its belief that there can be no satisfactory basis for peace in a system which implies the domination of the smaller nations by the Great Powers and involves the upkeep of armed forces for massed destruction. It welcomes declarations made in favour of world government, believing that the setting up of a world parliament would be an expression of the fundamental unity of mankind. It reaffirms its belief in the relevance of a personal renunciation of war and pledges itself to continue the work for the creation of a public opinion which will deny to Governments the right to use the method of war."

the Communists may reap a temporary advantage.

My opinion, for what it is worth, is that the Communists cannot control France permanently. But their attempt to do so may inflict very great suffering on France—even to civil war. To give a clear and inspiring lead to France is our plain and moral responsibility. For if France ceases to defend "the Rights of Man" they will, sooner or later, cease to exist throughout Europe.

These elementary conditions of civilized existence, as we understand it, are in greater danger today than they have ever been since they were first established. It is strange to think how few people are, even yet, aware of the true character of the human crisis.

Conscience takes sides

ON this issue, I am convinced, Pacifism must take sides. Unless Pacifism is completely convinced of the necessity of its being anti-totalitarian, it is, in my opinion, a quite superficial philosophy.

To imagine that it makes for peace is to ignore or minimize the profound antagonism between Socialism and Communism, between a free and a totalitarian society, between Western liberalism and Russia, is to ignore or minimize the difference between right and wrong. It is the duty of the pacifist at once to resist military conscription at home and resist totalitarianism abroad: and to resist them equally.

The great majority of men believe that in the last resort totalitarianism can be successfully resisted only by violence. The pacifist has a right to deny this; but he has no right to affirm that totalitarianism can be successfully resisted by non-violence. The truth is that Pacifism is not concerned with success or failure. It springs from conscience not from calculation. It is the pure assertion of the Moral Law, regardless of consequences.

RELEASE PROCEDURE FOR CO. TEACHERS

PROCEDURE for the release from conditions of registration (analogous to Class B release from the Armed Forces) in the case of teacher COs, has now been issued by the Ministries of Education and Labour, and by the Scottish Education Department.

In the case of England and Wales applicants need Form 30 RNS, obtainable from the Ministry of Education Teachers' Branch, 14-22, Lennox Gardens, London, S.W.1, or from the CBO, 6 Endsleigh Street, W.C.1. Applicants must fill in personal particulars, including teacher's qualification and previous experience, together with date of conditional registration and present occupation. When the CO has been offered a teaching post, the prospective employer must certify this on the back of the form.

The completed form must be returned to the Ministry (address as above), who, however, add that it "does not guarantee that out of turn release will be offered. A CO whose present employment is subject to labour controls will have to obtain the consent of the National Service Officer before he can leave it."

Scottish teachers must follow different procedure: they are to "obtain from an Education Authority or other body of school managers a certificate" of willingness to employ, which must be forwarded to the Scottish Education Dept. (Room 306), St. Andrew's House, Edinburgh, 1, together with full name, address, date of birth, superannuation number of teaching qualification, previous teaching experience, date of conditional registration, present occupation, and details of any period of service in HM Forces.

ANTI-NAZI SEMINARIES

Bishop Dibelius, one of the officers of the new council for the Evangelical Church in Germany, reports that during the war more than 2,000,000 reichmarks a year were secretly collected for the support of a thousand young ministers prepared in "illegal" seminaries and so refused ordination by the Prussian Nazi-controlled church. Through voluntary private support, the German Protestant Church expects in a few years to be able to carry on without State aid. (Worldover Press.)

Capt. J. R. White

He was the bravest man I ever knew,
His way was a straight challenge to
the heart—
Princes and principalities and powers
He rode triumphant, knowing that the
few,

Driven by the spirit militant, might
start
An era of world peace—that loss is
ours.
Anarchist, fighting still in freedom's
cause,
He yet upheld mankind's essential
laws.

PHYLLIS VALLANCE.

March, 1946.

"This Way to the Tomb!"

THE tomb of this odd and uninviting title is that of Saint Antony, sometime abbot of Santa Ferrata in the 14th century. We meet him in the first part of Ronald Duncan's play as a self-created exile on the island of Zante, attended only by three novices, a peasant, a poet and a scholar. For a week, he sets himself apart even from them, fasting, meditating, mortifying his body and his senses in the endeavour to lose himself and find God. Gluttony, lechery, sight, hearing—all these he can renounce, and take pride in the renunciation—ah, but that very pride is still his besetting sin, and not until he acknowledges this and calls on Jesus for mercy is his mind and conscience at rest.

Thus far, the "masque" takes us. The rest is "anti-masque," a trenchant, fundamental satire on our own evasive, rationalizing times. Father Opine is the leader of a modern scientific-religious sect which undertakes the task of exposing all "unreasonable" cults by means of the very latest electrical apparatus—and televising results to all its members (paid-up). "Without reason there is no faith," he cries to the resurrected but unrecognised Saint Antony. "Without faith there is no reason," rejoins the saint, so bringing the Father humbly to his knees and us, thankfully, to our feet.

I say "thankfully" without meaning to deride from the entertainment we have had. But there is a great deal of concentrated thought in this play, too much to be assimilated in one visit; it needs an "argument," or some such preparation, to help in its digestion. We come away full of admiration for the wit and searing perception of the author but (speaking at any rate for myself) feeling also bewildered by a brilliance which has sometimes dazzled without illuminating. Despite what one feels to be its essentially simple theme, the play remains master of us, not we of it; and that, to the non-poets among us, is apt to be a little unsatisfactory.

The production of this verse-play at the Mercury Theatre is beyond any criticism of mine. Benjamin Britten's music is beautiful when beauty is appropriate, harsh and discordant when those qualities are called for. The play has just been published by Faber. It will repay study before a visit to the stage performance is undertaken.

W. H. GELDER.

"NO CONSCRIPTION" PLANS FOR MANCHESTER

The recently formed Manchester No Conscription Council is organizing the 15 Parliamentary Divisions in the district for the forthcoming "No Conscription" Petition Campaign.

They intend to set up a small ad hoc committee in each constituency, on which the PPU, FOR, Labour Party, ILP, Common Wealth, the Churches, the Trades Unionists, etc., etc., are invited to be represented.

To make the necessary arrangements a meeting is to be held at the Friends' Meeting House, Mount Street, Manchester, on Wed., April 24, at 7 p.m., to which all local branches and others interested are invited to send delegates.

The Secretary of the Council is, Arnold Gregory, 114, Lawton Moor Road, Northenden, Manchester.

DR. BELDEN FOR U.S.A.

On April 20 Dr. A. D. Belden leaves by air for New York to begin a five months' preaching and lecturing tour of USA and Canada. He will lecture mainly on "Pax Christi," which is being published in the States to coincide with this visit, but also on "Christianity Calling," a new approach to the political problem, and on "The Distinctiveness of Christianity." He will visit Washington, Philadelphia, Princeton, Boston, Kansas, Chicago, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Vancouver, Winnipeg, Toronto, Montreal and Quebec.

DONALD SOPER ON THE AIR

Dr. Donald O. Soper, a sponsor of the PPU, is at present giving the "Talking with you" Sunday talks on the BBC Light Programme at 10.10 p.m.

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